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(54) **Data receiver and control system**

(57) The invention relates to the provision of a broadcast data receiver (4) for receiving broadcast data from a remote location and a portable device (16) such as a laptop computer or electronic personal organiser (PDA). The receiver (4) and the portable device (16) have the capacity to transmit and receive control signals to and from each other, typically via an infra red signal transmission system and the portable device (16) can access external data system providers such as internet service providers via the broadcast data receiver (4) and a communications link from the receiver to the external telecommunications network.

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Description

[0001] The invention to which this application relates is to provide a system to allow a personal computer or organiser device such as, for example, but not exclusively, a hand held or lap top personal computer or personal organiser or device to allow home shopping interaction, hereinafter referred to as a portable device or PDA to be operated in conjunction with a broadcast data receiver and to utilise the data receiver as a communications gateway.

[0002] It is well known, and increasingly so, for premises to be equipped with a broadcast data receiver which typically comprises a means for receiving transmitted broadcast data such as video and audio data which is transmitted via satellite, cable or terrestrial broadcast systems and is received by the broadcast data receiver. The broadcast data receiver is then provided with a means for decoding the data and, in connection with a television set or other display means, for generating the display and/or audio sound for viewing. The broadcast data receiver can also be provided with a telecommunications link which allows communication with external data system providers such as the data broadcaster, e-mail services, and the like.

[0003] The use of electronic personal organisers in place of conventional paper diaries or record systems, is also increasingly well known and companies such as Psion (RTM) have been developed on the basis of selling said products. The provision of lap top or hand held personal computers is also increasingly prevalent so that more and more of the general population have one or other, or electronic devices for specific functions such as for example ordering shopping from retailers and said electronic equipment being required to be used in their premises. A problem with the personal organiser or lap top or hand held computers in particular is that while the relatively small size of the same is useful in terms of compactness, portability and ease of use, if currently the same are required to be used in conjunction with any other form of equipment, for more comfortable viewing or perhaps greater usage, a physical connection is required to be provided, typically in the form of a cable connection between the PDA and the other equipment such as for example a modem connected to a telephone line into the premises to allow data to be transmitted along the telephone line or to a larger display screen to allow the data to be viewed in a more comfortable manner by a person within the premises. In each case, one, or a number, of physical connections is required to be used. This is time consuming in setting up the connections, can be difficult to achieve if the length of the connections is not sufficient and in general can be irritating to the user of the PDA devices.

[0004] The aim of the present invention is to provide a means for utilising the existing broadcast data receiver in a premises to allow the connection with a PDA and without the need for physical connections

between the same.

[0005] In a first aspect of the invention there is provided a data receiver and processing system, said system comprising a broadcast data receiver for receiving and processing data broadcast from a remote location, a communication link between the broadcast data receiving apparatus and external data system providers, a portable device for the processing of data and reacting to user selections input to the portable device and characterised in that the portable device and receiver apparatus are physically unconnected and provided with means to create a communications link which allows the transmission and reception of data signals between the portable device and receiver apparatus to allow the portable device to be used by the user to initiate access to an external data system via the broadcast data receiver and associated communication link and said receiver and communication link relaying data between the portable device and the external data system.

[0006] In one embodiment the broadcast data receiver includes a modem and the modem is connected to the communications link which is provided in the form of a telephone line which connects with the external telecommunications network and hence the external data system providers.

[0007] In one embodiment the portable device is of a form known as a PDA, such as an electronic personal organiser or laptop computer and the PDA is provided to transmit control signals and/or data to the broadcast data receiver which allows the control of the operation of the receiver with respect to at least the communication with the external data system providers.

[0008] In one typical embodiment the external data system or systems provider are internet service providers.

[0009] Preferably the communications link between the portable device (PDA) and the broadcast data receiver is an infra red system such that the portable device and broadcast data receiver each include means for generating and receiving and processing infra red data signals.

[0010] Typically the portable device can provide and/or receive any of e-mail, fax and telephone messages via the broadcast data receiver and infrared transmission system between the portable device and the receiver and in turn, by the receiver via the telecommunications line and modem. Thus, in effect the user of the portable device can sit in a room with the receiver connected to the telecommunications network and, by making the connection with the external data system providers "surf" the internet on their portable device.

[0011] It is also envisaged that in one embodiment, a number of portable devices can be used with respect to a common broadcast data receiver either at different times or at the same time, with each of the portable devices having an identification recognisable by the broadcast data receiver and which enables the receiver

to differentiate between portable devices during the reception and transmission of data between the same via the infra red communications link.

[0012] In a typical embodiment the portable device includes a display screen. In one embodiment the broadcast data receiver is connected to a screen and allows the display on said screen to be controlled via the portable device.

[0013] Typically, the broadcast data receiver acts as a communications link between the portable device and the external data system providers without physical contact or connection between the portable device and the receiver and the portable device is operable in conjunction with the broadcast data receiver when in line of sight of the receiver to allow the infra red signals to be sent and received.

[0014] Typically, the broadcast data receiver receives digital data broadcast from a remote location, decodes the same, processes the same for the generation of video, audio and/or text to the user via a display screen and speakers to which the receiver is connected or provided as an integral part thereof. In one embodiment the digital data is processed to form television programmes, teletext, electronic programme guides for display via a television set.

[0015] The digital data is broadcast and transmitted via any of satellite, cable or terrestrial broadcast systems and, if the data is transmitted via a satellite transmission system, associated apparatus to receive the data is provided externally of the premises.

[0016] Thus there is provided a system which utilises a broadcast data receiver, in addition to its "conventional" function of receiving and processing broadcast data, as a communications gateway for further apparatus and which allows the further apparatus in the form of a portable device which, itself, includes a means for processing data, memory and other functions, to communicate with external data providers via the broadcast data receiver. Furthermore the communication between the portable device and receiver is preferably physically unconnected thereby maintaining the "portability" of the portable device within the premises in which it is being used.

[0017] In a further aspect of the invention there is provided a data receiving and processing system, said system including a broadcast data receiver for receiving data which is broadcast from a remote location, a portable device (PDA) for the processing of data in response to user selections and characterised in that the portable device and broadcast data receiver are provided with a communications link which allows both the transmission and reception of data signals between the receiver apparatus and the portable device and the broadcast data receiver is provided with a modem and communications link to an external telecommunication network to allow the portable device, via the broadcast data receiver and external telecommunications link to communicate with internet service providers, and which

service is displayed on a display screen on the portable device and/or on a display screen connected to the broadcast data receiver.

[0018] Typically the portable device and broadcast data receiver are provided with infra red signal transmitting and receiving means to facilitate the sending and receiving of signals between the two devices so that in the broadcast data receiver the control of the modem is achieved and in the portable device the selection and commencement of any or any combination of arranged functions can be achieved such as, for example, web browsing, E-mail generation and receipt, internet access and IP telephone systems. The provision of this infra-red connection between the portable device and the broadcast data receiver eliminates the need for physical connection between the two and also means that the modem, which is typically conventionally provided within the broadcast data receiver in any case, can be used for an additional function. This also means that an additional modem is not required for the operation of the portable device, the inconvenience of having to trail a physical connection from the PDA to a telephone socket is eliminated, the need for multiple adaptors at the master socket is eliminated and the potential for overloading the REN at the master socket of the telephone system is overcome as the existing telephone connection between the broadcast data receiver and the master socket in the premises is used.

[0019] A specific embodiment of the invention is now described with reference to the accompanying drawing, wherein it illustrates in schematic fashion a system in accordance with the invention wherein there is shown a telephone line 2 connected to a master socket (not shown) at one end and to a broadcast data receiver 4 at the other end. The telephone line is in connection with the modem 6 in the broadcast data receiver via DAA 8 and the modem 6 is in turn controlled to respond to an infra red processor 10 which has an output 12 and receiving pass 14 as shown. A portable device (PDA) 16 is shown which may be, for example a personal organiser and is provided with infra red input 18 and output 20 paths so as to allow the transmission and receipt of infra red signals to and from the broadcast data receiver and thereby achieving the operation, control and selection of the function of the PDA and broadcast data receiver.

[0020] Typically the serial port interface of the modem is connected to an infra red Tx/Rx interface as shown. The infra red interface should preferably correspond to the IrDA standard which is a multi-layer, connection or entered packet base standard which specifies physical layer, LAP layer and LMP layer.

[0021] In order to allow the devices to be compatible the PDA implements a compatible streaming interface to that of the broadcast data receiver and operates a dummy serial port driver which connects to the IrDA port. A modem driver is provided in the PDA 16 and is configured to suit the specification of the modem 6 used

in the broadcast data receiver so as to allow the same to be compatible.

[0022] Conventionally the broadcast data receiver is provided with means, not shown, which allow for primary purpose of the apparatus to be performed, namely the reception of digital data which is broadcast from a remote location and received by, for example, a satellite antenna mounted externally of the premises and connected by cable to the broadcast data receiving apparatus provided internally of the premises. The broadcast data receiver then processes the data into television programmes, teletext, or electronic programme guides or the like for display, typically via a television set, not shown, to which the broadcast data receiver is connected or may alternatively be provided as an integral part thereof. The user can then control the broadcast data receiver to select the television programmes which they wish to watch.

[0023] However, the broadcast data receiver also has a use in accordance with the current invention as a communications gateway for further apparatus. Thus, in use, if the user of a portable device wishes to access, for example, the internet from a premises, they can do so by bringing their portable device into "sight" of the broadcast data receiver 4. When in sight the user can generate an appropriate access code via infra red signal to the broadcast data receiver. The receiver processes the signal and controls the modem to make connection via the telephone line 2, to a designated internet provider. When connection is made, data is provided from this external data system provider and transmitted for display, either via the broadcast data receiver to a display screen connected thereto or, more likely, via the broadcast data receiver and infra red signal transmission, to the portable device for display on a screen provided as part of the device. From then on further control signals and data can be transmitted as and when required.

Claims

1. A data receiver and transmission system, said system comprising a broadcast data receiver for receiving and processing data broadcast from a remote location, a communication link between the broadcast data receiving apparatus and external data system providers, a portable device (16) for the processing of data and reacting to user selections input to the portable device and characterised in that the portable device (16) and receiver apparatus (4) are physically unconnected and provided with means to create a communications link which allows the transmission and reception of data signals between the portable device and receiver apparatus to allow the portable device (16) to be used by the user to initiate access to an external data system via the broadcast data receiver and associated communication link and said receiver
2. A data receiver and transmission system according to Claim 1 characterised in that the receiver apparatus (4) includes a modem (6) and the modem (6) is connected to the communications link in the form of a telephone line (2) and hence to an external telecommunications network.
3. A data receiver and transmission system according to Claim 1 characterised in that the portable device (16) transmits control signals and/or data to the broadcast data receiver (4) which allows the control of the operation of the receiver (4) with respect to at least the communication with the external data system providers.
4. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 1 characterised in that the external data system or systems providers are internet service providers.
5. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 1 characterised in that the communications link between the portable device and the broadcast data receiver is an infra red system.
6. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 5 characterised in that the portable device and broadcast data receiver each include means for generating and receiving and processing infra red data signals.
7. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 5 characterised in that the portable device can provide and/or receive any of e-mail, fax and telephone messages via the broadcast data receiver (4) by the infrared transmission system between the portable device and the receiver and in turn, by the receiver (4) via a telecommunications line (2) and modem (6).
8. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 1 characterised in that the portable device (16) includes a display screen.
9. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 6 characterised in that the portable device (16) allows for the transmission of data from the device to the receiver apparatus (4) which in turn is connected to a screen and allows the display on said screen to be controlled via the portable device (16).
10. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 1 characterised in that the broadcast data receiver acts as a communications link between the

portable device and the external data system providers without physical contact or connection between the portable device and the receiver.

11. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 1 wherein the portable device is operable in conjunction with the broadcast data receiver when in line of sight of the receiver. 5

12. A data receiver and transmission system to claim 1 characterised in that the broadcast data receiver receives digital data broadcast from a remote location, decodes the same, processes the same for the generation of video, audio and/or text to the user via a display screen and speakers to which the receiver is connected or provided as an integral part thereof. 10 15

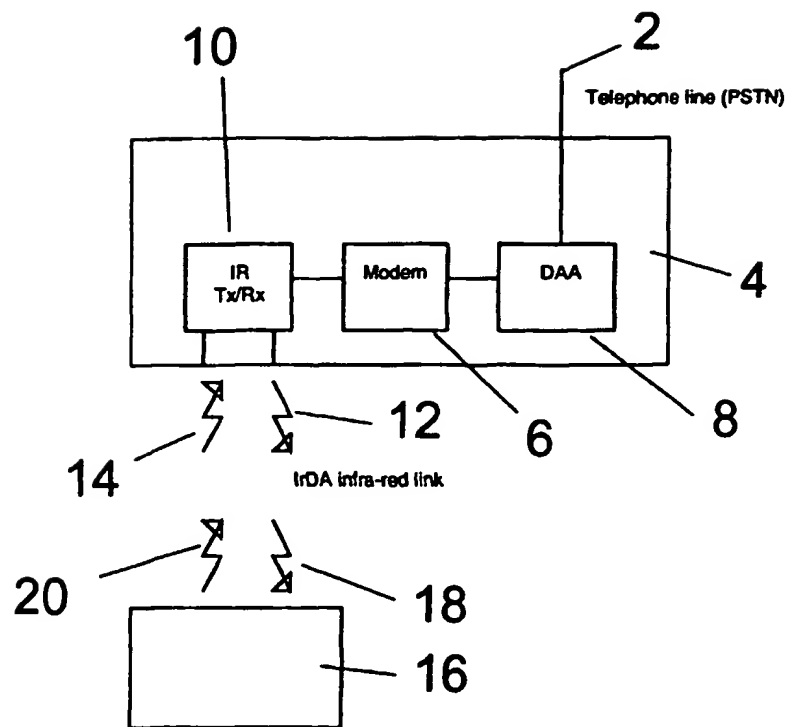
13. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 12 characterised in that the digital data is processed to form television programmes, teletext, electronic programme guides for display via a television set. 20

14. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 12 characterised in that the digital data is broadcast and transmitted via any of satellite, cable or terrestrial broadcast systems. 25

15. A data receiver and transmission system according to claim 14 characterised in that where the data is transmitted via a satellite transmission system, associated apparatus to receive the data is provided externally of the premises. 30

16. a data receiving and processing system, said system including a broadcast data receiver for receiving data which is broadcast from a remote location, a portable device (PDA) for the processing of data in response to user selections and characterised in that the portable device and broadcast data receiver are provided with a communications link which allows both the transmission and reception of data signals between the receiver apparatus and the portable device and the broadcast data receiver is provided with a modem and communications link to an external telecommunication network to allow the portable device, via the broadcast data receiver and external telecommunications link to communicate with internet service providers, and which service is displayed on a display screen on the portable device and/or on a display screen connected to the broadcast data receiver. 35 40 45 50

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 30 1937

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X	US 5 831 664 A (ROBERTSON SCOTT P ET AL) 3 November 1998 (1998-11-03) * abstract * * figures 1,2 * * column 1, line 5 - line 11 * * column 1, line 47 - column 2, line 10 * * column 3, line 25 - column 4, line 27 *	1-16	H04L29/06 H04L12/18
A	BISSELL R A ET AL: "THE SET-TOP BOX FOR INTERACTIVE SERVICES" BT TECHNOLOGY JOURNAL, GB, BT LABORATORIES, vol. 13, no. 4, page 66-77 XP000538881 ISSN: 1358-3948 * abstract * * page 66, left-hand column, line 1 - line 12 * * page 75, right-hand column, line 1 - line 41 *	1-16	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) H04L
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 10 August 2000	Examiner Adkhis, F
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 00 30 1937

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The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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10-08-2000

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 5831664 A	03-11-1998	NONE	

EPO FORM P0456

For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82

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